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ABSTRACT

A study examined the Military Education Program (MEP) for Army National Guard technicians. The MEP is an active Army program providing leadership and advanced military occupational specialty technical training. The primary objectives of the study were to determine whether the revised Reserve Component Noncommissioned Officer Education Program is a viable alternative to the MEP for technicians, how technicians' participation in the MEP affects readiness, and how the MEP affects technicians personally (including leave and other benefits). The MEP and Revised Component Program were found to be generally similar in content, but the Revised Component Program courses are sometimes shorter. The MEP costs about three times more to attend than does the Revised Component Program. The National Guard's readiness is not measurably affected by technicians' participation in the MEP, but daily unit operations are sometimes disrupted. The requirement to attend MEP training does not generally impose a financial hardship on technicians, but it can create some inconveniences. (Appendixes contain detailed discussions of the study's objectives, scope, and methodology.) (MN)

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Report to Congressional Requesters

ED296148

June 1988

RESERVE TRAINING

An Alternative to the Active Army Education Program for National Guard Technicians

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United States
General Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

National Security and
International Affairs Division

B-222994

June 28, 1988

The Honorable Sam Nunn
Chairman, Committee on
Armed Services
United States Senate

The Honorable Les Aspin
Chairman, Committee on
Armed Services
House of Representatives

The National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal years 1988 and 1989 (Public Law 100-180) requires that we report to you on the Military Education Program (MEP) for Army National Guard technicians. The MEP is an active Army program providing leadership and advanced military occupational specialty (MOS) technical training. You were told that the National Guard Bureau's policy requiring that technicians attend active Army MEP training instead of the reserve component training might have caused them undue hardship. During discussions with Committee staff, we agreed to examine (1) whether the revised Reserve Component Noncommissioned Officer (NCO) Education Program is a viable alternative to the MEP for technicians, (2) how technicians' participation in the MEP affects readiness, and (3) how the MEP affects technicians personally, including their leave and other benefits.

Technicians were required to attend the Reserve Component NCO Education Program before the requirement to attend the MEP was implemented. The Reserve Component Program is currently being revised using the MEP as its model. The results of our audit are summarized as follows:

- MEP and revised Reserve Component Program courses are generally similar in content, but Reserve Component Program courses are sometimes shorter.
- The MEP costs about three times more to attend than the Reserve Component Program.
- The National Guard's readiness is not measurably affected by technicians' participation in the MEP, but daily unit operations are sometimes disrupted.
- The requirement to attend MEP training, in most cases, does not impose a financial hardship on technicians, but it can create some inconveniences.

We discuss these issues in greater detail in appendix I and our objectives, scope, and methodology in appendix II.

Background

The Army National Guard consists mostly of part-time reservists, but it also has a small full-time support force comprised of Active Guard/Reserve personnel and technicians. Active Guard/Reserve personnel are Guard or Reserve members on full-time active duty; technicians are full-time civil service employees who must also be reservists in the Guard.

Technicians help maintain unit readiness by serving in full-time administrative, equipment maintenance, personnel, supply, and training positions. In 1985, the National Guard Bureau required technicians to attend the MEP to enhance their technical skills and thereby upgrade readiness. The National Guard Bureau believed that the MEP would more fully train technicians than the Reserve Component Program because the MEP had what was thought to be the most comprehensive training available at the time.

The MEP is an active Army program consisting of three levels of progressive training—the Primary Leadership Development Course (PLDC), the Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course (BNCOC), and the Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course (ANCOC). The PLDC is a 4-week leadership course. The BNCOC and the ANCOC focus on two separate phases: leadership and advanced MOS technical training. The BNCOC and the ANCOC vary in length, depending on the MOS: the BNCOC can last up to 19 weeks, and the ANCOC up to 16 weeks. The U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) has 19 specialized schools that administer MEP courses. National Guard technicians with sergeants' grades of E-5 through E-7 must complete the courses to be eligible for promotion in their military grades.

TRADOC is currently revising the Reserve Component NCO Education Program to align it more closely with the MEP. The Reserve Component Program will include the same three levels of progressive active Army leadership and advanced MOS technical training as the MEP. While the leadership courses have been completed, TRADOC officials stated that it will take until early 1989 to complete about 300 MOS courses. TRADOC had completed 35 MOS courses as of January 15, 1988.

Part-time soldiers will continue to attend the National Guard's 54 state NCO academies for the Reserve Component Program courses that are being revised. Bureau policy, however, will still require technicians to

attend the MEP because Bureau officials believe that the active Army training is more comprehensive.

Similarity of Reserve Component Program to the MEP

We compared programs of instruction for the MEP courses with programs of instruction for the new Reserve Component Program courses and found that they were generally similar in content but sometimes varied in duration. The organizations that developed the MEP—the Sergeants Major Academy at Fort Bliss, Texas (for leadership), and TRADOC's specialized schools (for advanced MOS technical training)—are also developing the new Reserve Component Program.

Officials at TRADOC's schools told us that they try to match the two programs' tasks and hours, one for one, whenever possible. These officials said, however, that there will sometimes be differences because of time constraints in reserve component training. When the duration of the reserve component course must be shortened, it is normally accomplished by eliminating a noncritical task, such as a physical fitness exercise, or by reducing the number of hours a task is taught. TRADOC officials told us that they generally reduce the number of hours in two ways. First, repetition is eliminated from course to course. Some subjects are repeated in many courses to provide refresher training which, in the opinion of TRADOC officials, can be eliminated. Second, repetition is eliminated within each course. TRADOC officials stated that, in their opinion, they can still maintain credible courses in the Reserve Component Program despite these adjustments.

Our comparison of the active and reserve component programs of instruction for the MEP and the new Reserve Component Program showed the following:

- The PLDCs are similar in content, but the reserve component course provides fewer hours of instruction.
- The leadership phases of the active and reserve component BNCOCs and ANCOCs are similar in both content and duration. For example, the leadership phases of the ANCOCs for both the active and reserve component programs cover the same five tasks. In the active component course, these tasks are taught in 99 hours, and in the reserve component course the tasks are taught in 106 hours.
- Similarities between the MOS phases for the active and reserve component BNCOCs and ANCOCs vary, depending on the courses: the infantry courses are similar in both tasks and hours; the ordnance courses are

generally similar in content, but the reserve component courses normally provide fewer hours of instruction; and the transportation courses are dissimilar.

TRADOC officials explained that the dissimilarity in the transportation courses occurred because the reserve component courses had been completed using active component programs of instruction that were undergoing revision. This resulted in the addition of more tasks to the active component program of instruction after the reserve component program of instruction had been completed. TRADOC officials explained that, when time permits, the reserve component courses will be updated to reflect the additional tasks. More recently completed courses, however, are similar in both tasks and hours.

Allowing Technicians to Attend the Reserve Component Program Could Reduce Costs

We compared the actual cost for technicians to attend the MEP courses with an estimated cost for them to attend the new Reserve Component Program courses in three states and found that the MEP cost is about three times higher. For example, the cost to send 80 technicians to the MEP in Alabama, Michigan, and Virginia was about $678,000. The estimated cost to send the same technicians to the revised reserve component courses would be about 36 percent of that amount, or $241,000. MEP's higher cost can be attributed largely to the greater length of the MEP courses; higher transportation costs to travel out of state; and attendance by technicians at the MEP in a military status, which sometimes results in their receiving dual compensation (both military pay and civilian pay). Such cost differences could be significant considering that the National Guard currently has about 14,000 technicians in the E-5 through E-7 military grades who, under current Bureau policy, will have to attend the active Army MEP to be promoted.

National Guard Bureau officials stated that the higher costs associated with the MEP should be weighed against certain benefits to the technicians of attending the MEP courses—interaction with active Army personnel, the intensity of the active Army training, and the consistency of training. For example, Army training officials believe that having all technicians attend the same course at the same place increases consistency and standardization, which are difficult to achieve at the National Guard's 54 NCO academies.

On the other hand, some state National Guard headquarters officials told us that, in their opinion, the split training of the reserve component

courses may be more effective for technicians than the continuous training provided by the MEP courses. These officials explained that during split training technicians can learn part of the course material on a weekend and then apply it during their weekday jobs. This practice, they stated, could help to balance the reduction in hours of instruction in the Reserve Component Program.

Guard Readiness Not Measurably Affected by Technicians' Participation in the MEP, but Daily Unit Operations Are Sometimes Disrupted

National Guard unit readiness, as indicated by the Unit Status Report, has not been measurably affected by technicians' attendance at the MEP according to National Guard officials in the four states we visited. The Unit Status Report, which is one among many readiness indicators, serves as a resource management tool by providing a single source document for assessing the unit's readiness status. National Guard Bureau officials told us that they had not expected to see a measurable improvement in unit readiness (as reflected in the Unit Status Report) when the Bureau decided to require technicians to attend MEP training. Even so, the Bureau believed that sending technicians to MEP training would enhance their leadership and MOS technical skills and thereby have a positive, though perhaps not measurable, impact on readiness. To date, however, the National Guard Bureau has not evaluated whether participation in the MEP affects technicians' job performance. State National Guard officials told us that technicians' participation has not adversely affected readiness because technicians are carried on the units' roles and are available for immediate recall, if necessary, while they attend MEP training.

Technicians' attendance at MEP training can disrupt daily unit operations; however, the disruption does not appear to be significant. State National Guard officials told us that due to the MEP requirement (1) some maintenance facilities in Alabama had not met their equipment maintenance production goals when technicians attended the training, (2) one administrative office in Michigan estimated that it would lose 5,100 staff days between 1987 and 1991, and (3) some technicians had resigned from the National Guard. In some cases, while technicians attended the MEP, units hired temporary employees to help complete the tasks technicians had performed.

MEP Requirement Causes Inconveniences Rather Than Financial Hardship for Most Technicians

The requirement to attend MEP training, in most cases, does not impose financial hardship on technicians, but it can cause them some inconveniences. We found that, rather than losing money while attending the MEP, 85 percent of the technicians we surveyed received more pay than if they had remained in their technician jobs. Technicians can be inconvenienced, however, by being away from their families for extended periods, sometimes up to 19 weeks. Technicians can also be inconvenienced when they attend the MEP because they may lose some of their civil service benefits—civilian salary, health benefits, and the accumulation of annual and sick leave. Even though technicians may lose some civil service benefits, their loss is partly offset by military benefits.

For example, if the MEP course exceeds 30 days, technicians can convert to military health coverage. However, technicians told us that this conversion in health coverage can create inconveniences, such as not having access to their family physicians or not having a military health facility located close to their homes. If technicians believe that these situations are too inconvenient, they have the option to maintain their civil service health benefits by paying their own premiums. The Office of Personnel Management is developing a proposal that would allow technicians to continue their civilian health benefits coverage for up to 1 year while on military duty for training.

Potential Problems in Implementing the Reserve Component Program

The Department of Defense Annual Statement of Assurance[1] for fiscal year 1987 identified training management in the Army National Guard as a "material weakness." TRADOC officials told us that they are concerned about the ability of the National Guard's 54 NCO academies to apply the standard programs of instruction in a consistent and standardized manner. In addition, these officials said that for the program to be successful the Guard's 54 NCO academies will need adequate resources to achieve the program's training objectives. National Guard Bureau officials told us that they share similar views regarding the ability of the Guard's NCO academies to apply the material in a consistent and standardized manner because of the large number of schools and differences in their quality. The U.S. Army's Reserve Component Training Strategy Task Force is currently considering these and other problems while developing a comprehensive strategy for the future training of reservists.

[1]This report is prepared in accordance with the Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act of 1982 (Public Law 97-255).

Conclusions

We believe that the Reserve Component Program, as revised to date, together with implementation of training management improvements required to enable its effective implementation by the Guard's NCO academies, may be a viable alternative to the MEP. The two programs are now more similar in design and content and, as a result, technicians would receive similar leadership training and advanced MOS technical training at the new Reserve Component Program, which was not offered when the MEP requirement for technicians was first implemented. The National Guard Bureau can also reduce costs by changing its policy to allow current and future NCO technicians to attend the new Reserve Component Program instead of the MEP. In addition, this change in Bureau policy should result in less personal inconvenience to technicians. However, it may not always be feasible to teach a particular specialty in the Reserve Component Program and, in such cases, MEP training would be required for technicians with those MOSs.

We recognize that some benefits of the MEP—interaction with active Army personnel and the intensity and consistency of the active Army training—will be lost if technicians attend the Reserve Component Program. We believe that these lost benefits, however, can be offset to some extent by the benefits—similarity to the MEP, reduced cost, and less personal inconvenience—of sending technicians to the new Reserve Component Program.

Although we did not evaluate the implementation and administration of the new Reserve Component Program, other evaluations identified training management as a weakness within the Guard. If the Reserve Component Program is to provide effective training for part-time soldiers and a viable alternative to the MEP for technicians, the Army National Guard must take steps to ensure its successful implementation and administration.

Once the courses are implemented, they will require close monitoring and evaluation to ensure that TRADOC's training objectives and standards are being achieved. This is important because of the differences in numbers of tasks and hours of instruction that sometimes occur between the two programs. If training objectives and standards are not being achieved, alternatives will need to be considered, such as redesigning the course or sending technicians to the MEP for that particular MOS.

Recommendations

We recommend that the Secretary of the Army take the following actions:

- Ensure, through continued monitoring, that the remaining revisions to the Reserve Component Program are similar to those of the MEP.
- Monitor and evaluate the implementation and administration of the Reserve Component Program by the National Guard's NCO academies to ensure that effective training is provided.
- When the new program is successfully implemented and administered, change the National Guard Bureau's policy of sending technicians to the active Army MEP, requiring them instead, whenever feasible, to attend the Reserve Component Program.

Agency Comments and Our Evaluation

We have included Department of Defense (DOD) comments on a draft of this report as appendix III. DOD agreed with the results of our audit. It agreed with our first two recommendations and partially agreed with the third recommendation. Specifically, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs will task the Secretary of the Army to (1) monitor the remaining revisions to the Reserve Component Program, (2) monitor the new program's implementation and administration by the National Guard's NCO academies, and (3) change the National Guard Bureau's policy to allow technicians, whenever feasible, to attend the new Reserve Component Program. In a draft of this report, we proposed that the Army change its policy of sending technicians to the active Army MEP, requiring them instead to attend the Reserve Component Program. We modified that proposal to reflect DOD's concern that it may not always be feasible to teach a particular MOS course in the Reserve Component Program and, in such cases, leeway should be provided for technicians to attend a MEP course.

We are sending copies of this report to the Chairmen, House Committee on Government Operations, Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs, and House and Senate Committees on Appropriations; the Secretaries of Defense and the Army; the Director, Office of Management and Budget; and other interested parties.

Frank C. Conahan
Assistant Comptroller General

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Abbreviations

ANCOC	Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course
BNCOC	Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course
DOD	Department of Defense
GAO	General Accounting Office
MEP	Military Education Program
MOS	military occupational specialty
NCO	Noncommissioned Officer
PLDC	Primary Leadership Development Course
TRADOC	Training and Doctrine Command

Reserve Rather Than Active Army Education Program May Be Viable Alternative for National Guard Technicians

Background

The Army National Guard consists of about 500,000 individuals—50,000 full-time support personnel and 450,000 part-time soldiers. The full-time support force consists of Active Guard/Reserve personnel and technicians. Active Guard/Reserve personnel are Guard or Reserve members on full-time active duty; technicians are full-time excepted civil service employees who, as a condition of employment, must also be reservists in the Guard. Active Guard/Reserve personnel and technicians help maintain unit readiness by serving in administrative, equipment maintenance (technicians only), personnel, supply, and training positions.

In the mid-1980s, the National Guard Bureau established a policy requiring that Active Guard/Reserve personnel and technicians attend the Military Education Program (MEP) to enhance their technical skills and thereby upgrade readiness. The MEP is an active Army program consisting of three levels of progressive training—the Primary Leadership Development Course (PLDC), the Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course (BNCOC), and the Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course (ANCOC). The PLDC is a 4-week course that prepares the soldier for the battlefield by providing training in leadership, combat operations, and survival skills. The BNCOC and the ANCOC focus on two separate phases: leadership and advanced military occupational specialty (MOS) technical training. The leadership phases of the BNCOC and the ANCOC build upon the leadership skills acquired in the PLDC, and the MOS phases provide training in advanced MOS technical skills. The BNCOC and the ANCOC vary in length, depending on the MOS: the BNCOC can last up to 19 weeks, and the ANCOC up to 16 weeks. The U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) has 19 specialized schools that administer these MEP courses, and the MOS determines which school the soldier will attend.

Active Guard/Reserve personnel must complete the MEP training for promotion and continued participation in the Active Guard/Reserve program. Technicians with sergeants' grades of E-5 through E-7 must complete the training to be eligible for military promotion. Part-time soldiers are not required to attend MEP training because of job constraints and, instead, can attend reserve component courses for promotion purposes.

Prior to the MEP requirement, Active Guard/Reserve personnel and technicians, together with part-time soldiers, received training through the Reserve Component Noncommissioned Officer (NCO) Education Program administered by the National Guard's NCO academies. Until recently, the

Reserve Component Program courses consisted of only leadership training and did not include the advanced MOS technical training offered in the active Army MEP courses. The National Guard Bureau believed, therefore, that the MEP would more fully train technicians than the Reserve Component Program. The Bureau also believed that, after completing the MEP, technicians would be better able to train the part-time reservists.

TRADOC is currently revising the Reserve Component NCO Education Program to align it more closely with the MEP. The Reserve Component Program will include the same three levels of progressive leadership and advanced MOS technical training that the active Army MEP offers. While the leadership courses have already been completed, TRADOC officials stated that it will take them until early 1989 to complete about 300 MOS courses. TRADOC had completed 35 MOS courses (23 BNCOCs and 12 ANCOCs) as of January 15, 1988. Forty-six percent of all E-6 National Guard NCOs have MOSs covered by the 23 completed BNCOCs, while 21 percent of all E-7 National Guard NCOs have MOSs covered by the 12 completed ANCOCs.

TRADOC's schools, in accordance with TRADOC headquarters guidance, are structuring the reserve component courses so that part-time soldiers can complete the entire program within 1 training year. A training year includes one 2-week active duty training period and 12 inactive duty, or weekend, training periods. Each state has the option to determine how it will implement the program. For example, some states may allow their soldiers to attend the Reserve Component Program in place of their annual training (the 2-week active duty period), while other states may require their soldiers to attend the program in addition to their annual training.

Part-time soldiers will continue to attend the National Guard's 54 state NCO academies for the Reserve Component Program courses that are being revised. Bureau policy, however, still requires Active Guard/Reserve personnel and technicians to attend the MEP training because Bureau officials believe that the active Army training is more comprehensive.

Active and Reserve Component Courses Are Similar in Content but Vary in Duration

We compared programs of instruction for the MEP courses with programs of instruction for the new Reserve Component Program courses and found that the courses were generally similar in content but sometimes varied in duration. Programs of instruction are formal course documents that, among other things, describe course content and hours of instruction. The organizations that developed the programs of instruction for the MEP—the Sergeants Major Academy at Fort Bliss, Texas (for leadership), and TRADOC's specialized schools (for advanced MOS technical training)—are also developing the new reserve component programs of instruction. Their objective is to make the Reserve Component Program courses as much like the MEP courses as possible, while concentrating on the most critical tasks necessary to prepare the soldier for mobilization. For example, TRADOC has instructed its schools to develop reserve component courses that will train to the same standards established for the active Army courses.

Officials at TRADOC's schools told us that their objective when developing Reserve Component Program courses is to match their tasks and hours to those of the MEP courses, one for one, whenever possible. These officials stated, however, that there will sometimes be differences between the two programs in the numbers of tasks and hours because of time constraints in reserve component training. Officials at the schools told us that when a task must be eliminated from a reserve component program course, it will normally be a non-wartime-critical task, such as a physical fitness exercise, a drill, or a ceremony.

TRADOC officials told us that when the number of course hours must be reduced, they generally do it in two ways. First, repetition is eliminated from course to course. Some subjects are repeated in many courses to provide refresher training which, in the opinion of TRADOC officials, can be eliminated without affecting the credibility of the course. Second, repetition is eliminated within each course. Officials told us that some MEP training is duplicative and can be eliminated. For example, TRADOC officials noted that some MEP courses teach the repair of the same component, such as a generator, on three different pieces of equipment. In such cases, TRADOC subject matter experts said that they will teach that task only once in the reserve component course, thereby eliminating two thirds of the hours for that particular task.

TRADOC's schools have the option of requesting additional time from TRADOC headquarters, beyond the 1-year training period established for each soldier to complete the reserve component courses, to make the two programs as much alike as possible. For example, due to the technical

complexities of the signal career management field, TRADOC has allowed additional training time beyond the 1-year limit to provide for more comprehensive reserve component courses. TRADOC is also considering requests to extend training time for other reserve component courses.

Despite the differences that sometimes occur in the number of tasks and hours of instruction between the two programs, TRADOC officials said that by applying the above techniques they can design a credible Reserve Component Program. They said that technicians can also enhance their skills through other technical training options, such as on-the-job training.

Comparison of Leadership Programs of Instruction

Our comparison of the MEP and reserve component programs of instruction for the PLDC showed that these courses were similar in content, but the reserve component course provides fewer hours of instruction. Table I.1 shows that both the active and reserve component PLDCs cover the same six tasks. However, the active component course provides 207 hours of instruction, while the reserve component course provides 115 hours of instruction.

Table I.1: Tasks and Hours of Instruction in the Active and Reserve Component Programs' Primary Leadership Development Courses

Figures in hours

Tasks	Active component	Reserve component
Leadership	34	22
Communications	7	5
Resource management	6	7
Training management	16	5
Professional skills	34	8
Military studies	110	68
Total	**207**	**115**

Differences in hours between the active and reserve component PLDCs are most pronounced in the professional skills and military studies tasks. The active component PLDC teaches the professional skills task for 34 hours, while the reserve component PLDC teaches the task for 8 hours. For the professional skills task, physical fitness is taught for 14 hours in the active component course and for 1 hour in the reserve component course. As another example, drills and ceremonies are taught for 12 hours in the active component course and for 3 hours in the reserve component course. For the military studies task, the active component PLDC provides 110 hours of instruction, while the reserve component

PLDC provides 68 hours. Although this task is divided into about 30 subject areas, one subject area—conducting defensive and offensive operations—accounts for about one half of the difference in hours. The active component course provides 44 hours of instruction in this subject, while the reserve component course provides 20 hours. Most of the remaining military studies subject areas match in hours, one for one.

Our comparison of the leadership phases of the active and reserve component BNCOCs and ANCOCs showed, on the other hand, that these courses were similar in both content and duration. Tables I.2 and I.3 show that the leadership phases of the BNCOCs and ANCOCs for both the active and reserve component programs cover the same five tasks. In the active and reserve component BNCOCs, these tasks are taught in the same number of hours. In the active component ANCOC, five tasks are taught in 99 hours, and in the reserve component course the same five tasks are taught in 106 hours.

Table I.2: Tasks and Hours of Instruction in the Leadership Phases of the Active and Reserve Component Basic Noncommissioned Officer Courses

Figures in hours

Tasks	Active component	Reserve component
Leadership	10	11
Military skills	15	15
Professional skills	2	2
Resource management	9	9
Training management	9	8
Total	**45**	**45**

Table I.3: Tasks and Hours of Instruction in the Leadership Phases of the Active and Reserve Component Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Courses

Figures in hours

Tasks	Active component	Reserve component
Leadership	15	20
Effective communications	23	14
Resource management	10	8
Professional skills	23	23
Military studies	28	41
Total	**99**	**106**

Comparison of MOS Programs of Instruction

Our comparison showed that the active and reserve component MOS programs of instruction are generally similar in tasks but that the reserve component courses sometimes provide fewer hours of instruction. The National Guard has over 300 MOSs, each representing a different military

job. For example, the 11C MOS is for an indirect fire infantryman; the 63H MOS is for a track vehicle repairer. We compared 11 (7 BNCOC and 4 ANCOC) of the 18 MOS programs of instruction that three TRADOC schools—the Infantry School, Fort Benning, Georgia; the Ordnance Center and School, Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Maryland; and the Transportation School, Fort Eustis, Virginia—had revised as of October 8, 1987.

Infantry Courses

Table I.4 shows that the infantry MOS programs of instruction for the active and reserve components are similar in both the number of tasks and hours. For example, the MOS phase of the active component BNCOC for indirect fire infantrymen covers 65 tasks in 176 hours, while the reserve component course covers 61 similar tasks in 164 hours.

Table I.4: Tasks and Hours of Instruction in Infantry Courses

	Active component		Reserve component	
MOS BNCOC courses	**Tasks**	**Hours**	**Tasks**	**Hours**
Heavy anti-armor weapons	73	173	69	165
Indirect fire infantryman	65	176	61	164
Infantryman	66	198	61	171

Ordnance Courses

Table I.5 shows that the two programs' number of tasks are generally similar but that, normally, fewer hours of instruction are provided in the reserve component courses. For example, the MOS phase of the active component BNCOC for self-propelled field artillery systems mechanics covers 87 tasks in 276 hours, while the reserve component course covers 80 similar tasks in 154 hours.

Table I.5: Tasks and Hours of Instruction in Ordnance Courses

	Active component		Reserve component	
MOS BNCOC courses	**Tasks**	**Hours**	**Tasks**	**Hours**
Self-propelled field artillery systems mechanic	87	276	80	154
Tank turret repairer	87	441.5	66	172
MOS ANCOC courses				
Light wheel vehicle mechanic	61	188	55	112
Self-propelled field artillery systems mechanic	61	188	55	112
Track vehicle repairer	79	218	72	125
Armament/fire control maintenance supervisor	88	269	81	134

TRADOC officials explained that reserve component courses had been shortened by reducing the hours of instruction for some tasks, while eliminating other tasks. For example, the self-propelled field artillery systems mechanic course includes a task entitled "logistics training." In the active component course, this task is covered in 54.5 hours of instruction, while the reserve component course covers the task in 23 hours. The number of hours for the reserve component course was shortened by reducing the hours of instruction proportionately for each subject area within the logistics training task. The reserve component course for field artillery systems mechanic was further shortened by eliminating 12 hours during which the active component course covered automotive maintenance on the high mobility multi-purpose wheeled vehicle (which replaces, among other vehicles, the standard Army jeep). TRADOC officials at the Ordnance Center and School explained that they had eliminated this section from the reserve component course because it included elementary training such as oil changing, which had already been taught on similar equipment.

The tank turret repairer course exhibits a large difference in tasks and hours of instruction between the active and reserve component programs of instruction. The active component course covers 87 tasks in 441.5 hours, while the reserve component course covers 66 similar tasks in 172 hours. TRADOC subject matter experts said that the difference in the number of tasks was achieved mostly by consolidating tasks that are taught separately in the active component course. For example, the active component course teaches the use of military publications in 6 hours and the Army maintenance management system in 5 hours. The reserve component course, however, consolidates these two tasks and provides the instruction in 4 hours.

The difference in hours of instruction was achieved in two ways. First, the numbers of hours of instruction in active component tasks were proportionately reduced in reserve component tasks. For example, the active component support maintenance operations task is covered in 4 hours of instruction, while the same task in the reserve component is covered in 2 hours of instruction. Second, there are two subject areas—"repair of the M1 tank" and the "Bradley Fighting Vehicle"—that are covered in many more hours in the active component course than in the reserve component course. For example, the active component tank turret repairer course provides 53 hours of instruction on maintenance of the Bradley Fighting Vehicle, while the reserve component course provides 13 hours of instruction. TRADOC officials at the Ordnance Center and School told us that, although there is a substantial difference in hours of instruction between the two programs, there are several other options available to provide training for force modernization equipment like the Bradley Fighting Vehicle. These options include training by the U.S. Army's new equipment training teams, as well as the technical contractor equipment teams that visit units to provide introductory maintenance instruction. Furthermore, the National Guard Bureau also expects instructors at its new Regional Training Sites for Maintenance to help provide continuous training for the operation and repair of equipment. The National Guard currently has 6 of the planned 21 Regional Training Sites for Maintenance open for training.

Transportation Courses

Table I.6 shows a dissimilarity between the active and reserve component courses in both number of tasks and hours. For example, the MOS phase of the active component BNCOC for traffic management coordinators covers 40 tasks in 190 hours, while the reserve component course covers 20 tasks in 100 hours.

Table I.6: Tasks and Hours of Instruction in Transportation Courses

	Active component		Reserve component	
MOS BNCOC courses	**Tasks**	**Hours**	**Tasks**	**Hours**
Motor transport operator	25	137	15	100
Traffic management coordinator	40	190	20	100

TRADOC officials at the Transportation School told us that the reserve component courses had been completed using active component programs of instruction that were being revised. As a result, some tasks were added to the active component programs of instruction after the

reserve component programs of instruction had been completed. Therefore, the numbers of tasks covered and hours taught in the active and reserve component programs of instruction are different. TRADOC officials explained that, while no specific milestone has been established, when time permits they will go back and revise the reserve component traffic management coordinator program of instruction and others to match them more closely to the active component programs of instruction.

TRADOC officials also told us that more recently completed reserve component programs of instruction match the active component programs of instruction more closely. For example, the recently completed reserve component watercraft operator program of instruction covers 22 tasks in 114 hours, while the active component course covers the same 22 tasks in 122 hours.

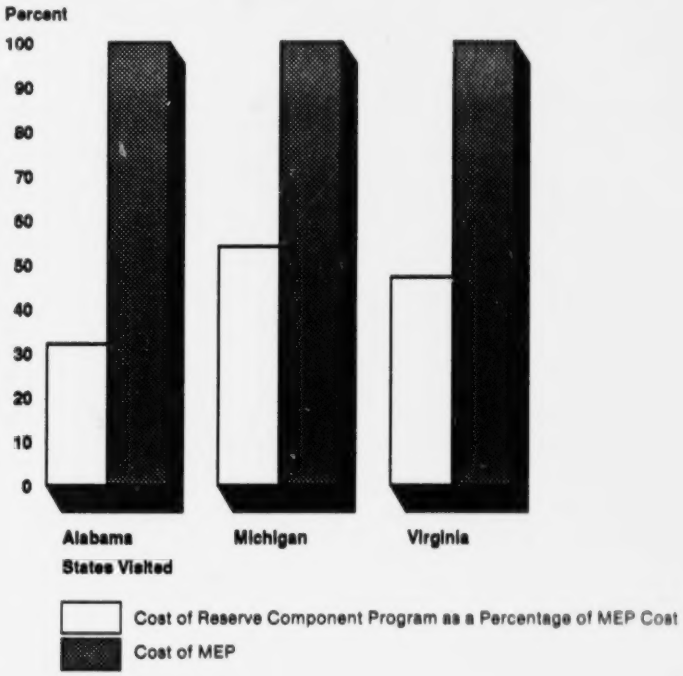
MEP Costs Exceed Costs of the Reserve Component Program

We compared the actual cost for technicians who attended the MEP courses with an estimated cost for them to attend the Reserve Component Program in three states and found that the MEP cost is about three times higher. The higher cost can be attributed to the active component's longer courses, higher transportation costs to travel out of state, payment of per-diem expenses, and dual compensation (both military pay and civilian pay) while the technician is in a military leave or annual leave status.[1] National Guard Bureau officials believe that the higher MEP costs must be weighed against a number of benefits technicians receive by attending the active Army courses.

Our cost comparison included data collected on technicians in Alabama, Michigan, and Virginia who attended the MEP between March 1985 and September 1987. The cost to send 80 technicians to the MEP in these three states was about $678,000. We estimate that the cost to send the same technicians to the reserve component courses would have been about 36 percent of that amount, or $241,000. For example, it cost the Alabama National Guard about $546,000 to send 55 technicians to the MEP, while the cost to send the same 55 technicians to the Reserve Component Program courses would have been 68 percent less, or $174,000. Figure I.1 shows the cost of the Reserve Component Program as a percentage of the total MEP cost for Alabama, Michigan, and Virginia.

[1] In calculating the cost of technicians' MEP training, we included the cost of civilian annual leave payments. We recognize that annual leave would be paid regardless of whether technicians attend MEP training. However, since the data provided to us by the states did not separate payments for military leave from payments for civilian annual leave, we could not distinguish between them.

Figure I.1: Cost of the Reserve Component Program as a Percentage of the Total MEP Training Cost



Such cost differences could be significant considering that the National Guard has about 14,000 technicians in the E-5 through E-7 military grades who, under current National Guard Bureau policy, will have to attend the active Army MEP to be promoted.

National Guard Bureau officials stated that the higher MEP costs should be weighed against certain benefits to the technician—interaction with active Army personnel, the intensity of active Army training, and the consistency of training. Technicians attend MEP training along with their active Army counterparts, allowing the two groups to interact and exchange job experiences. Active Army training officials believe that the intensity of instruction that technicians gain in attending the MEP in one continuous training session provides a better learning experience than reserve component training, which splits training between one 2-week period and weekend drills. Furthermore, school officials believe that having all technicians attend the same course at the same place increases consistency and standardization, which are difficult to achieve at the National Guard's 54 NCO academies. Bureau officials also said

that, in some cases, more hours of instruction are provided in the MEP courses, thereby ensuring more in-depth training for technicians. On the other hand, some State National Guard headquarters officials told us that, in their opinion, the split training of the reserve component courses may be more effective, particularly for technicians, than the continuous training provided by the MEP courses. These officials explained that technicians, in many cases, have 15 or 20 years of experience and practice their National Guard job skills on a day-to-day basis. During split training, technicians can learn part of the course material on a weekend and then apply it during their weekday jobs. This practice, according to National Guard officials in one state, could help to balance the reduction in hours of instruction in the reserve component training program.

Guard's Readiness Not Measurably Affected by Technicians' Attendance at the MEP

National Guard unit readiness, as indicated by the Army's Unit Status Report, has not been measurably affected by technicians' attending MEP training according to National Guard officials in the four states we visited. National Guard Bureau officials told us that they had not expected to see a measurable effect in unit readiness (as reflected in the Unit Status Report) when the Bureau decided to require technicians to attend MEP training. Even so, Bureau officials said that they believed that sending technicians to MEP training would enhance their leadership and MOS technical skills because the active Army had the most comprehensive and in-depth training available at the time. These officials also stated that if technicians can be better trained they should, as a group, be more capable of having a positive impact on readiness. To date, however, the National Guard Bureau has not evaluated whether participation in the MEP affects technicians' job performance.

National Guard units file a quarterly Unit Status Report,[2] which is one among many readiness indicators. This report serves as a resource management tool and provides a single source document for assessing the unit's status by rating (1) personnel readiness, (2) equipment on hand, (3) mission-capable equipment, and (4) unit training readiness. Each category is individually rated from 1 to 5, with 1 being the highest. The unit is assigned an overall rating, which generally cannot exceed the lowest individual rating. While the National Guard Bureau has not studied the effect of the MEP requirement for technicians on readiness, state National Guard officials at both headquarters and unit levels in the four states we visited told us that the MEP has no measurable effect on unit readiness as indicated by the Unit Status Report. State National Guard

[2]The Unit Status Report is part of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Status of Resources and Training System.

officials also told us that technicians attending MEP training are available for immediate recall, if necessary. Therefore, these technicians are still considered part of a unit's assigned strength for unit readiness reporting purposes.

Technicians' Attendance at the MEP Can Disrupt Daily Unit Operations

While National Guard officials at the four states we visited said that technicians' attendance at the MEP does not measurably affect readiness, they said that it sometimes disrupts daily unit operations. The disruption, however, does not appear to be significant. State National Guard officials told us that, due to the MEP requirement, (1) some maintenance facilities had not met their equipment maintenance production goals when technicians attended the training, (2) one administrative office had estimated that it would lose 5,100 staff-days between 1987 and 1991, and (3) some technicians had resigned from the National Guard. In some cases, while technicians attended the MEP, units hired temporary employees to help carry out the tasks technicians had performed. National Guard Bureau officials noted that there are other factors, in addition to the MEP requirement, that can disrupt unit operations such as individuals on temporary duty assignment or on annual or sick leave.

National Guard officials in Alabama provided us with data showing that the National Guard Bureau's established goal of 52 percent productive maintenance time (actual time devoted to maintenance activities versus other duties) for each Organizational Maintenance Shop, Unit Training Equipment Site, and Combined Support Maintenance Shop was not always achieved when technicians attended MEP training. For example, one Organizational Maintenance Shop that, according to a State Guard official, had been performing at about 52 percent productive maintenance time reported that it performed at 43 percent for the quarter ending June 30, 1987, while one of its technicians attended an ANCOC. Alabama National Guard officials identified another Organizational Maintenance Shop that had performed at 35 percent one quarter and 43 percent the next, while two technicians attended an ANCOC. State National Guard officials said that the productivity levels returned to about 52 percent once the technicians returned from MEP training. According to these officials, technicians' attendance at MEP training can result in maintenance backlogs, especially in the smaller shops. They said, however, that several larger maintenance shops in Alabama had technicians attending MEP training and still met the 52 percent productive maintenance goal.

National Guard officials in Michigan studied the expected impact of the MEP on its U.S. Property and Fiscal Office over the 5-year period 1987 to 1991. This office, consisting of 106 employees, is responsible for all financial and material resources provided to the Michigan Army and Air National Guard. The study concluded that approximately 5,100 workdays, or 20 staff-years, would be lost during that 5-year period while Active Guard/Reserve personnel and technicians attended MEP training. The study also cited the loss of skilled specialists and key managers during MEP training and the impracticality of finding qualified personnel for temporary assignment to replace them.

National Guard officials in all the states we visited told us that some technicians had resigned because of the MEP requirement. For example, Virginia officials cited three technicians who had stated on official records that the MEP requirement was their reason for resigning. Virginia National Guard officials noted that a total of 33 years of experience had been lost with these resignations.

While officials in the states we visited said that they occasionally hire temporary personnel to compensate for technicians' attending MEP training, they said that temporary hiring practices varied because of funding constraints, specialty skills required, and the length of the MEP course. National Guard officials in Michigan documented cases where units had hired temporary personnel to replace technicians at MEP training. For example, in one instance, the Michigan National Guard spent about $3,008 to hire a temporary employee for 45 days to replace a technician at MEP training.

MEP Requirement Can Cause Inconveniences

The requirement to attend MEP training, in most cases, does not impose financial hardship on technicians, but it can cause them some inconveniences. We found that, rather than losing money while attending MEP, most technicians received more pay than if they had remained in their technician jobs. Technicians can be inconvenienced, however, by being away from their families for extended periods, sometimes up to 19 weeks. Technicians can also be inconvenienced when they attend the MEP because they may lose some of their civil service benefits—civilian salary, health benefits, and the accumulation of annual and sick leave. Even though technicians may lose some civil service benefits, their loss is partly offset by military benefits.

Most Technicians Do Not Lose Pay While at MEP Training

We collected data nationwide on the 619 technicians who had attended the MEP between March 1985 and September 1987 and found that the National Guard Bureau had spent about $2.9 million—$1.9 million in military pay and allowances and $1.0 million in civilian pay—for technicians to participate in this training. National Guard regulations require technicians to use available military leave prior to other leave to attend MEP training. Technicians receive 15 days' military leave for training each year (unused military leave can be carried over to the next year up to a maximum of 30 days). While on military leave, the technician receives both military pay and allowances and civilian pay. The technician, after using military leave, then has the option to use annual leave or compensatory leave or enter leave-without-pay status. While on annual leave or compensatory leave, the technician continues to receive both military pay and allowances and civilian pay. When technicians enter leave-without-pay status, however, they receive only military pay and allowances. Table I.7 shows the average number of days' leave, by category, that the technicians used to attend the MEP courses.

Table I.7: Average Days of Leave Used to Attend MEP Courses

Figures in days

Course	Number of technicians	Military leave	Annual leave	Leave-without-pay	Compensatory leave
Primary Leadership Development Course	290	16	8	11	1
Basic NCO Course	142	14	13	32	1
Advanced NCO Course	187	14	16	34	4

We found that, given the actual leave combination used by the 619 technicians while attending the MEP, most technicians we surveyed (92.4 percent) received more pay than they would have received if they had been at their technician jobs for the same time period. We also estimated the amount of pay the 619 technicians we surveyed would have received had they entered leave-without-pay status from their technician jobs, after using their military leave, thereby receiving only military pay and allowances. We found that, without using any annual leave, 526 technicians, or 85 percent, would have received an average of $1,030 more in total pay while attending MEP than they would have received at their technician jobs for the same time period. This compensation includes the dual pay received while on military leave. The remaining 15 percent would have lost an average of $614. These technicians would have lost

money because their military salaries are lower than their technician salaries. For example, in one case, the technician's military grade was E-5, with a salary of $19,797, while his technician grade was Wage Grade 11, with a salary of $27,297.

Length of Courses Can Cause Technicians Inconvenience

For the 619 technicians who attended the MEP, the PLDC lasted an average of 4 weeks, the BNCOC lasted 9 weeks, and the ANCOC lasted 10 weeks. Technicians who are away from home for these time periods often experience inconveniences. For example, family inconveniences can occur when the technician's spouse also works and there are children. In addition, personal inconveniences can occur when, for example, technicians temporarily discontinue outside educational pursuits while attending the MEP.

Conversion of Health Benefits Can Cause Technicians Inconvenience

Civil service health benefits terminate, pursuant to Office of Personnel Management regulations, if the MEP course exceeds 30 days. The technician and family members, however, are entitled to a 31-day extension of coverage to allow time for converting to military health coverage. Technicians told us that this conversion in coverage from civilian health benefits to military health benefits can create inconveniences. For example, services provided by technicians' regular family physicians would no longer be covered. In addition, the military health facility may not always be close to the technician's home, thereby requiring lengthy trips to the military health unit. Technicians have the option, however, to maintain their civil service health benefits by paying their own premiums. Technicians explained, however, that this can also be a hardship because they might have to borrow the money or take it out of savings.

The Office of Personnel Management is developing a proposal that would allow technicians to continue their civilian health benefits coverage for up to 1 year while on military duty for training. This change in health coverage would be similar to a legislative change made in January 1987 whereby the technician's life insurance coverage now continues for up to 12 months while in a non-pay status.

Technicians' MEP Attendance May Affect Other Benefits

Technicians in a non-pay status for an entire pay period do not accrue annual or sick leave. For example, one technician reported that he had been in a non-pay status for 55 workdays while attending the BNCOC and, therefore, had not accumulated 33 hours of annual leave and 22 hours of sick leave during that time.

Technicians continue to accrue civil service retirement credit, but only if their non-pay status does not exceed 6 months in any calendar year. Since MEP requirements are met in less than 6 months, there is no loss in civil service retirement credit. In addition, technicians earn military retirement points while performing active duty for training (1 point for each day of training), which enable them to increase their military retirement pay.

Potential Problems in Implementing the Reserve Component Program

The Department of Defense Annual Statement of Assurance for fiscal year 1987 identified training management in the Army National Guard as a "material weakness." For example, due to widespread management weaknesses in individual and unit training, the report concludes that there are no assurances that National Guard soldiers receive training in all required tasks.

Although we did not review the Reserve Component Program's management or administration, TRADOC officials told us that they are concerned about the ability of the National Guard's 54 NCO academies to apply the standard programs of instruction in a consistent and standardized manner. These officials said that for the program to be successful the Guard's NCO academies will need adequate resources, such as qualified instructors and the proper equipment, to achieve the program's training objectives. National Guard Bureau officials told us that they share similar views regarding the ability of the Guard's NCO academies to apply the material in a consistent and standardized manner because of the large number of schools and differences in their quality. The U.S. Army's Reserve Component Training Strategy Task Force is currently considering these and other problems while developing a comprehensive strategy for the future training of reservists.

Objectives, Scope, and Methodology

Our objectives were to examine (1) whether the Reserve Component NCO Education Program is a viable alternative to the MEP for Army National Guard technicians, (2) how technicians' participation in the MEP affects National Guard readiness, and (3) how the MEP affects technicians personally, including their leave and other benefits.

As requested, we limited our review to Army National Guard technicians. We concentrated on technicians who were E-5, E-6, and E-7 noncommissioned officers because the MEP is required for their military promotions and they make up the majority of the technician force.

To obtain overall program and policy information regarding the MEP, we interviewed numerous National Guard Bureau officials in Washington, D.C. These officials included the Chief of the National Guard Bureau and the Director of the Joint Staff of the National Guard Bureau.

To determine whether the Reserve Component NCO Education Program is a viable alternative to the MEP, we focused our review on a comparison of courses offered and cost to attend the two programs. To determine the similarity of the two programs, we compared the programs of instruction for the active and reserve component courses. We compared all leadership courses and 11 of the 18 BNCOCs and ANCOCs completed as of October 1987. Our comparison focused on the tasks and number of instructional hours included in the programs. We discussed the course content of the active and reserve component programs with officials from headquarters, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, Fort Monroe, Virginia. We also contacted the Sergeants Major Academy at Fort Bliss, Texas, regarding its development of the PLDC and the leadership phases of the BNCOCs and the ANCOCs. We also visited the following TRADOC activities: the Infantry School at Fort Benning, Georgia; the Ordnance Center and School at Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Maryland; and the Transportation School at Fort Eustis, Virginia, regarding their development of the MOS technical phases of the BNCOCs and the ANCOCs. By visiting these 3 (out of 19) TRADOC schools, we were able to compare over one half of the completed programs of instruction for the new Reserve Component Program. We were not able, however, to make a qualitative comparison of the two programs because the Reserve Component NCO Education Program is not fully operational.

National Guard officials in each state we visited assisted us in identifying the cost to send technicians to the MEP and in estimating the cost to send the same technicians to their states' NCO academies for the Reserve Component Program. We attempted to make this cost comparison for all

technicians who attended the MEP between March 1985 and September 1987 in Alabama, California, Michigan, and Virginia, having selected these states to obtain a geographical distribution of technicians from around the United States. We could not make the cost comparison in California due to the unavailability of records at the state level. The cost to attend both the MEP and the Reserve Component Program was developed using four factors: military pay and allowances, transportation costs, travel and per-diem expenses, and technician pay received while at training. We did not include the cost of facilities or instructors in our comparison because TRADOC officials stated that, since only a few technicians would attend either program at any one time, new facilities or additional instructors would not be required.

During visits to the above four states, we also interviewed State National Guard officials to obtain their views on the advantages and disadvantages of MEP training for technicians and to identify their states' experiences with the program. We interviewed officials from the Office of the Adjutant General; the Plans, Operations and Training Officer; and the Support Personnel Management Officer.

We reviewed Department of the Army guidance for analyzing readiness indicators and for reporting the status of the Army National Guard forces under the Unit Status Report. In addition, we discussed the MEP's impact on readiness and day-to-day unit operations with Bureau- and State-level National Guard officials and unit commanding officers of technicians who had attended the MEP. Since we reviewed the readiness reporting criteria and discussed these criteria with Bureau officials, we did not review unit status reports. However, we did review other documents that demonstrated the MEP's effect on unit operations, such as equipment maintenance productivity reports and personnel actions involving hiring temporary employees and technician resignations.

To determine the MEP's impact on technicians personally, we collected data nationwide, with the assistance of the National Guard Bureau's Civilian Technician Branch, on all technicians who had attended the MEP between March 1985 and September 1987. We received complete data from 619 technicians and aggregated it to provide such information as the type and average days of leave technicians used while attending the MEP and the average amount of military pay and allowances and civilian pay technicians received while at MEP training. We also discussed technicians' concerns about the MEP with representatives from the Association of Civilian Technicians, the National Association of Government Employees, and the National Association of Federal Employees. We also

interviewed some technicians in each of the four states we visited regarding the MEP's impact on them personally.

We performed our review between August 1987 and January 1988 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

Comments From the Department of Defense

Note: GAO comments supplementing those in the report text appear at the end of this appendix.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

RESERVE AFFAIRS

April 25, 1988

Mr. Frank C. Conahan
Assistant Comptroller General
U.S. General Accounting Office
Washington, DC 20584

Dear Mr. Conahan:

This is the Department of Defense (DoD) response to the General Accounting Office (GAO) Draft Report, "ARMY TRAINING: Reserve Education Program May Offer Viable Alternative for National Guard Technicians", dated March 22, 1988, (GAO Code 393269/OSD Case 7569).

See comment 1.

The Department of Defense concurs with the findings in the draft report and with all but the final recommendation. The Department believes that the National Guard policy requiring MEP training of National Guard technicians would be more flexible by allowing attendance at either AC or RC courses in certain circumstances. Specific comments are enclosed.

Stephen M. Duncan

Enclosure
As Stated

GAO DRAFT REPORT - DATED MARCH 23 1988
(GAO CODE 393269) OSD CASE 7569

"ARMY TRAINING: RESERVE EDUCATION PROGRAM MAY OFFER VIABLE ALTERNATIVE FOR NATIONAL GUARD TECHNICIANS"
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE COMMENTS ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS
*****

RECOMMENDATIONS

Now on p. 8

- RECOMMENDATION 1: The GAO recommended that the Secretary of the Army monitor the remaining revisions to the Reserve Component Program to ensure that its courses are similar to those of the MEP. (P.10/GAO Draft Report)

- DOD RESPONSE: Concur. The Assistant Secretary of Defense (Reserve Affairs) (OASD/(RA) will task the Secretary of the Army, not later than 1 June 1988, to conduct this monitoring.

Now on p. 8

- RECOMMENDATION 2: The GAO recommended that the Secretary of the Army monitor the implementation and administration of the Reserve Component Program by the National Guard's NCO academies to ensure effective training is provided. (p. 11/GAO Draft Report)

- DOD RESPONSE: Concur. The OASD/RA will task the Secretary of the Army, not later than 1 June 1988, to conduct this monitoring.

Now on p. 8

- RECOMMENDATION 3: The GAO recommended that, when the new program is successfully implemented and administered, the Secretary of the Army change the National Guard Bureau policy of sending technicians to the active Army MEP, requiring them instead to attend the Reserve Component Program. (p.11/GAO Draft Report).

- DOD RESPONSE: Partially Concur. Not all National Guard technicians should be required to attend (AC) MEP courses. To change policy, however, from requiring technicians to attend MEP to requiring them to attend only Reserve Component (RC) programs would be inappropriate. No credit would be given MEP courses, which are as good as, and probably in some cases better than, the RC Program courses. This change in policy, will allow leeway for Guardsmen to use a (AC) MEP course if it is not feasible to teach a particular speciality in the RC Program. OASD/RA will ask the Secretary of the Army to clarify this policy and provide their guidance for the record.

The following are GAO comments on the letter from the Assistant Secretary of Defense dated April 25, 1988.

GAO Comments

1. The draft report title was changed to better portray the report's main message.

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